

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim Status: Claims 1-4, 6-18, 20-24, and 26-27 are presented for consideration. Claims 5, 19, and 25 were previously canceled.

In the Office Action dated January 11, 2005, the Examiner objected to claim 6 as depending from canceled claim 5. Appropriate correction has been made so that claim 6 depends from claim 1.

Claims 1, 4, 9, 16, 17, 20, 23, 24, and 26 were rejected over 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lang et al U.S. Patent No. 5,880,895.

More specifically, with regards to independent claim 1, the Examiner states that Lang discloses a positive lock assembly 44 disposed proximate the connection element, the positive lock assembly having a locking element 40, 45 and a biasing element 43 urging said locking element to a locking position with respect to said holder and yielding to allow the locking element to be moved in response to an external force so that said holder and connection element may be detached. The Examiner points to the specification at column 5, lines 1-29 in support of this characterization of the Lang reference.

Applicant has studied the Lang reference thoroughly and believes that it fails to disclose a positive lock assembly having a locking element and a biasing element as claimed by the applicant. The locking element said to be shown in Lang by reference number 40, as cited by the Examiner, is not a locking element as called for in claim 1. Referring to the Lang reference at column 5, lines 1-29, reference number 40 refers to side extensions running along a portion of the length of a receiving groove 22. Side extensions 40 do nothing to "lock" the holder, designated by the Examiner in Lang as

reference number 23, in place. They are present to guide the holder into receiving groove 22. The Examiner further states that retaining protrusions 45, described by Lang as "dimples" carried by side extensions 40, are included as part of the locking element. It is clear from the detailed description in column 5 lines 24-29 that retaining protrusions 45 are little more than bumps on side extensions 40 that prevent holder 23 from sliding out of groove 23. There is no positive engagement of either side extensions 40 or retaining protrusions 45 with holder 23, but rather only a passive restraint of the holder by retaining protrusions 45. Accordingly, Lang fails to disclose a positive locking assembly as called for in claim 1.

Further, claim 1 calls for the locking element to be movable between a locking position in which the locking element protrudes from said positive lock assembly and a retracted position in which the locking element is at least partially withdrawn into said positive lock assembly. Lang completely fails to disclose this limitation as neither side extensions 40 or retaining protrusions 45 as described or shown as having any ability to move to engage or disengage from holder 23. Accordingly, there is no disclosure in the Lang reference of side extensions 40 being capable of moving to allow for them to move between a protruding locking position and withdrawn retracted position as called for in claim 1.

Additionally, side extensions 40 terminate at opposing ends into angular side pieces 43. The Examiner has cited the angular side pieces as being the biasing element called for in claim 1, as well as independent claims 16 and 23. Nowhere does Lang disclose a biasing element that urges either of side extensions 40 or retaining protrusions 45 into a locking position. As stated in column 5 starting at line 17, the

angular side pieces are provided to form "a tapering shape of the receiving groove 22." It is clear that angular side pieces 43 are not biasing elements and only serve to define receiving groove 22, and do not in anyway urge, bias, or direct side extensions 40 against the holder 23 when inserted into groove 22. The Lang reference does not disclose in either the figures or the description of the invention that the angular side pieces 43 bias side extensions 40 into a locking position with respect to the holder, or that they are further capable of yielding to withdraw said locking element into a retracted position, as called for specifically in claim 1. There is simply no teaching in the Lang reference of a biasing member which urges side extensions 40 or retaining protrusions 45 against the holder.

Claim 16 was specifically amended to recite that the biasing element vertically urges the locking element into a locking position with the holder. Again, there is no disclosure in the Lang reference of a biasing element which urges a locking element into a locking position, claim 16 is believed allowable for the above reasons as well. Further, assuming that side extensions 40 are not just guide members and can be said to teach a locking element, a feature not shown or describe in the Lang reference, they engage the holder in a horizontal arrangement by gripping the sides of the holder. Applicant's locking element operates in a vertical orientation by locking into a depression on the swivel face of the holder. Accordingly, Lang fails to disclose the limitations as called for in claim 16.

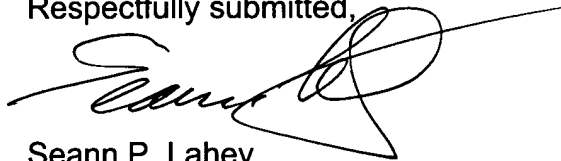
Specifically with regard to claim 23, the claim has been amended to call for the locking element to be movable between a locking position and a retracted position. As stated above, the Lang reference fails to disclosure this claimed feature of applicant's

invention. Further, the claim also calls for the biasing element to have a spring constant urging said locking element into said locking position. The Lang reference does not disclose angular side pieces 43 as having a spring constant capable of biasing side extensions 40. Accordingly, the Examiner's citing of the angular side pieces 43 as biasing elements anticipating this limitation of claims 1, 16, and 23 is misplaced. Claim 23 was further amended to call for the spring constant to yield in order to allow the locking element to move to the retracted position during engagement of the connection element in the holder. As there is no disclosure in Lange of the angular side pieces 43 urging the locking element 40 into a locking position, there is also no disclosure of them having a spring constant which is yielding to move the locking element to the retracted position.

Accordingly, it is believed that claims 1, 16, and 23 are in condition for allowance, and that claims 2-4, 6-15, 17-18, 20-22, 24, and 26-27 which depend from these claims, are also believed to be in condition for allowance for the above stated reasons.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the case be passed to issuance in due course of patent office procedure.

Respectfully submitted,



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